

**HOME** | Bulldogs post first unbeaten season at home since 1993 with 1-0 win against Rockhurst



Redshirt freshman Tony Diepenbrock fights for the ball against a Rockhurst defender Wednesday. Logan Jackson/Index

Continued from Page 17  
people and hit people and people kind of get scared to come at us with the size and strength we have back there."

Truman have scored 24 goals at home this season and given up just four. They have scored 29 goals overall and have given up 10. In comparison, last year the Bulldogs scored 17 goals at home and gave up eight. They scored 38 goals on the season and gave up 12.

Some of the credit for the boost in offense could be attributed to assistant coach Joe Nick. He is currently in his second year with the Bulldogs. Nick played for Truman from 1993-96. He is ninth all-time at Truman in goals scored and fifth in assists.

"Joe, [student assistant] Dan [Russell] and I fought hard with these guys and told them, 'This is your home field, get results here,'" Cochran said.

Knierim said the crowd has also played a big part in the Bulldogs' success at home. There have been more than 400 people at four of the eight games. During Truman's first two games, there were more than 500 in attendance.

"We've been getting pretty good crowds," Knierim said. "We have an explosive offense, and when they hear that crowd they really get going. In the soccer program, we really stress taking it to the other team when they're on our home field."

Knierim said the biggest win at home for Truman came in their third game. The Bulldogs knocked off preseason No. 1 Fort Lewis College 2-1 in front of a crowd of approximately 600.

The Bulldogs have four guaranteed games left this season, which are all on the road.

"The offense sometimes takes a while to get started on the road," Knierim said. "If we give up an early goal, it's hard to come back from that. When we don't come out firing on all cylinders like we do at home, we're back on our heels."

**SWEEPS** | Ten sweeps is most since 2008 season

Continued from Page 17  
percentage of .220 but held the Bearcats to .025.

The first set was close throughout. The Bulldogs had a 21-20 lead and scored four straight points, thanks to kills from Sharpe and junior outside hitter Molly Sinclair, to give Truman the 25-20 win.

The Bulldogs started out strong in the second set by winning the first four points. Truman never allowed Southwest Baptist to pull even and went on to win 25-14. The Bearcats had a -.125 hitting percentage in the set. The Bulldogs have held opponents to a negative hitting percentage in 15 sets this season.

Sophomore right-side hitter Lauren Radix stepped up in the third set, leading the Bulldogs to a 25-17 win to finish the sweep. Radix had five kills in the set, including three in the final four points for Truman.

"It was great," Sharpe said. "Definitely in the first two games we came out strong and we put it on them. I think in the third game we might have come out a little slower, and they also came out fired up and ready to go. But we put them away and it was a good game all around."

Truman traveled to Kansas for back-to-back games last weekend. The Bulldogs first played No. 2 Washburn University, who Truman beat at home earlier this season.

The Lady Blues matched the Bulldogs by winning 3-1 at home. Washburn won the first two sets before Truman took the third. However, it was not enough, as the Lady Blues came back to win the fourth set.

Washburn managed to hit only .167 but held the Bulldogs to a .055 hitting percentage, their lowest of the season. Head coach Ben Briney said neither team was playing well offensively, but that transition points made the difference for Washburn.

"Their offense was just a little better than our offense," Briney said. "We couldn't quite convert in transition. We were struggling in transition and a little bit as far as offensively and serve-receives. And that was kind of the difference, they converted a few more times than we did."

The Bulldogs stayed in Kansas to play Fort Hays University on Saturday. Truman started slow, dropping the first set 18-25. But, the Bulldogs rallied to win the next three sets and win the match 3-1.

Sophomore middle blocker Emily Briseno had 10 kills and hit .368 to lead the Bulldogs. Truman responded after the Washburn loss and raised the team hitting percentage to .185.

"Hays is always tough, because you play such a battle Washburn, then you have to drive out to Hays," Briney said. "They're a young team, but we fought through everything and got a good win."

Truman will host Missouri Southern State University at 7 p.m. Friday. Senior night will be against Pittsburg State University at 6 p.m. Saturday.

The Bulldogs will honor their four seniors — Barker, setter Ashley Petak, libero Casey Bruno and right-side hitter Jenna Novelli.

"[Senior night] is going to be a little emotional, but definitely fun," Barker said. "I'm looking forward to it."

**WIN** | Bulldogs go 2-0 during week, currently second in the South Central region

Continued from Page 17  
called for a foul inside its own goal box, resulting in a penalty kick for Rockhurst. The shot, taken by midfielder Paolo Scoppola, was on goal, but Knierim made the save in what Nick called one of the best of the year.

"Tyler came up huge today," Cochran said. "He really showed Rockhurst why he is our goalie. When you save [penalty kicks] like that, it means good things are happening."

Junior midfielder Jonathan Brown said that Monday's win against Newman University was a close match. Brown said Newman is a good team that played hard until the end. The 'Dogs scored two in the first half, and after scoring again in the second half, Newman began attacking the 'Dogs with everything they had, Brown said.

"We didn't play as well as we would have liked," Brown said. "But it's better to win playing ugly than lose playing well."

Senior midfielder Bobby Larkin had his second goal of the season in Sunday's match. Larkin now leads NCAA Div. II in assists. Brown said it's a great asset to the team to have a player like Larkin who can pick people out and get them the ball.

"We have a lot of options and everyone brings something different to the team," Brown said. "It's a very good combination when it comes together and works."

Brown said that while the officials try their best, they don't always call it the same way for both teams. Brown said it's important for the players not to let the referees bother them and to keep playing their game.

In yesterday's match against Rockhurst, Nick was ejected during the last 10 minutes of the match. Nick said it was because of a call the official failed to make.

"When a forward or a team on the offensive goes past the last defender and gets taken down, that defender should be



Junior midfielder Charlie Backus looks for an open teammate Wednesday against Rockhurst. Logan Jackson/Index

ejected from the game," Nick said. "That's in the NCAA rulebook and, again for the second time this year, we had a referee who didn't even give out a card when it should have been an ejection."

The coaches, the team and members of the crowd were in an uproar when the official gave him his second card for arguing about a call. Nick said he was glad to take the ejection because he used the opportunity to politely tell the official to

consult the rulebook again.

Truman has two away games left and the Newman University Classic to stay in playoff contention. The 'Dogs will travel to Columbia, Mo., this Friday to face off against Columbia College. Cochran said this will be one of the toughest opponents they'll face this season.

"Columbia College was one of our only losses last season, so we'll show up ready to play," Cochran said.

**COMEBACK** | Davis throws two touchdown passes in final five minutes for win

Continued from Page 17  
good field position down 27-24.

It worked out better than that — sophomore defensive back Anthony Freeman forced a fumble on the Hornet's first play.

"We got exactly what we talked about, what was going to occur on the sideline, and sometimes everything is right," Nesbitt said. "We knew the play that we were going to get and we had a free hitter in An-

thony Freeman, who actually over-ran the ball just a little bit."

Six plays later, on 3rd-and-goal from the 1, Davis connected with sophomore running back Will Mosquera to take the lead for Truman. It was the first time this season Davis has thrown more than one touchdown in a game.

Davis also led the team in rushing with 96 yards on 19 carries, and senior defensive back Michael Elliott

led the 'Dogs with nine tackles.

The freshmen also were involved, as tight end Dallas Grier led the 'Dogs with 112 yards receiving. Also, quarterback Conrad Schottel led a touchdown drive in the second quarter, although he did throw an interception later in the game.

"Good and bad," Nesbitt said of Schottel's performance. "Number one, we don't win the ballgame if he's an unsung hero. He stepped in when

Phil got dinged and showed great pocket presence and great poise."

The win comes a week after the Bulldogs defeated Missouri Southern State University 23-6 at Stokes Stadium. Truman forced seven turnovers in the contest, which Elliott said, at the time, was "the best win all season."

The Bulldogs play at 1 p.m. Saturday against Washburn University at Stokes Stadium.

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